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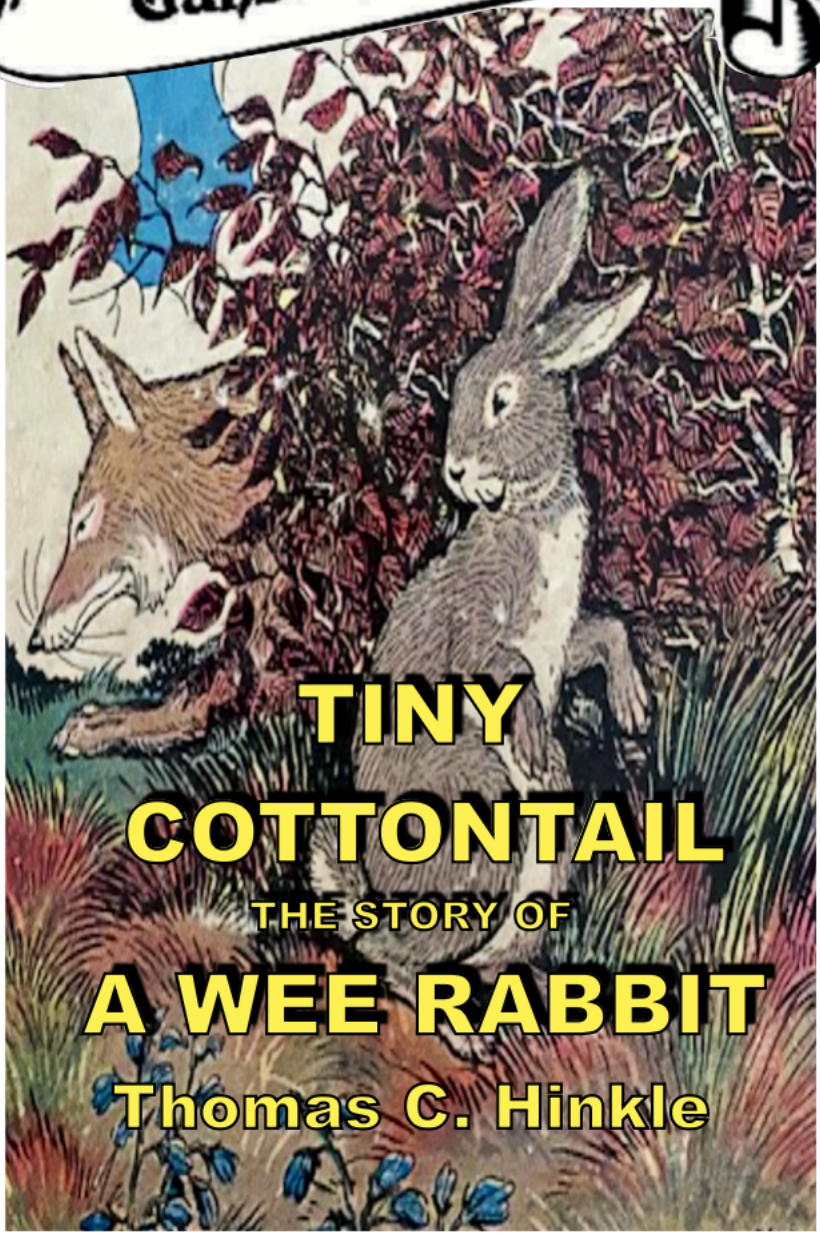

TINY COTTONTAIL

THE STORY OF

A WEE RABBIT

Thomas C. Hinkle

Gunston & The Book Bunnies

The Gunston Trust

Gunston Classics

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A WEE RABBIT

Thomas C. Hinkle

Milo Winter - Illustrator

Second Edition

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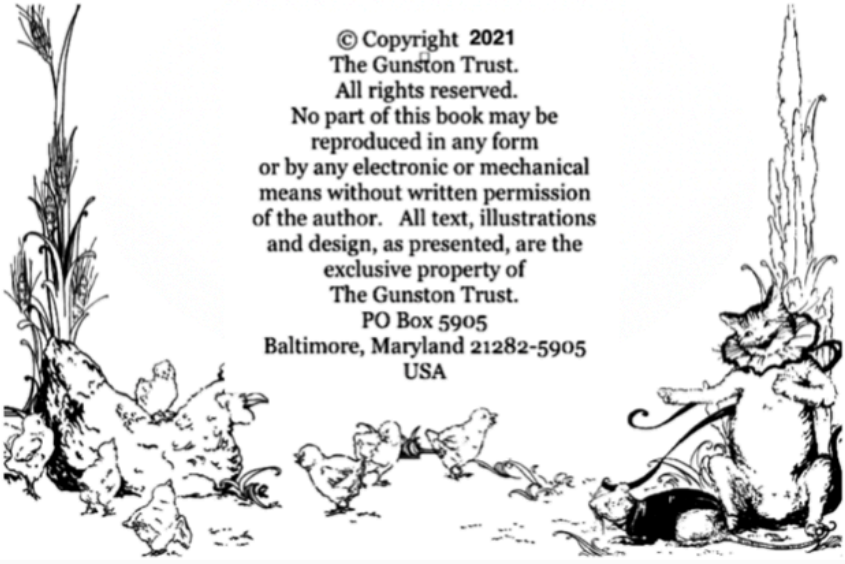

Introduction

Welcome to the Great Green Woods and meet all the wonderful animals that live there. Enjoy all the fun and adventures for young readers and listeners. Charming tales of neighbor helping neighbor that build pleasant and innocent memories of childhood and delightful bedtime dreams.

TGT

Tiny shivered inside of himself"

TINY COTTONTAIL

1

TINY OUTWITS CAP THE HOUND

Tink-a-link-link. Tink-a-link-a-link-a-link. Tink-a-link," sang the water as it fell from the Crystal Spring at the head of Hickory Hollow. "Tink-a-link-l;ink" it sang as it fell over the tiny fall and into the clear little pool below.

Tiny Cottontail was sitting on a stump at the edge of a thicket listening to the music of the little waterfall. And Oh, how he did want a drink! Yes, Tiny Cottontail wanted a drink, worse even than he had ever wanted cabbage. And boy did he love cabbage. But he didn't dare leave the stump. The sun shone on the thicket near him and made the green leaves glow. But Tiny was not thinking about that just then. He was too thirsty.

He peeped through the leaves at the Crystal Spring. How cool and fresh the rippling water looked! The more he looked at the clear water the more thirsty he became. But Tiny didn't dare move.

You see, he had just had a close shave getting away from Cap the Hound and he knew Cap was looking for him.

Tiny had jumped up on the stump and was now sitting quite still. He didn't even blink his little round black eyes. Tiny was tired and hot and thirsty, but Cap was not twenty feet away, crashing into thicket after thicket everywhere he thought Tiny might be hiding. Now he came sniffing along the ground straight toward the stump where Tiny sat.

Tiny's little round eyes opened wide and he crouched low in fear. All the time Cap was coming nearer and nearer. But Tiny

didn't move - no he didn't even wobble his little nose, and that's keeping mighty still for a rabbit.

Sniff! Sniff! Sniff! Phrrr! Phrrr! On came Cap. He would sniff a bit and then thrust his nose under a log or into a hole in a stump and make those dreadful sounds. His long ears trailed on the ground while he sniffed and hunted, and every minute his tail wagged faster and faster as he looked for Tiny to jump out. But Tiny Cottontail was a wise little rabbit. Indeed he was. He was frightened, of course, and he certainly had reason to be, with Cap so near. But Tiny doesn't lost his head in time of danger. He

keeps right on thinking. In fact, that's when he thinks the hardest. You see, Tiny had learned long ago that, no matter how terrible Cap looks, the little bunny is quire safe if he sits perfectly still, especially if he sits up on a stump or log. For Cap, although he has a wonderful nose for finding rabbits, is awfully stupid when it comes to using his eyes. Yes, sir-ee, he is. And that's not so strange since he always keeps his eyes right on the ground where he is sniffing. He might as well be blind for all the good his eyes do him on a trail.

So Tiny sat still. Of course he was frightened. No matter how many times Tiny gets away from Cap the Hound he never

gets use to being chased by him. He simply can't get use to it. He knows mighty well what Cap would have for breakfast if he got a chance.

Cap came sniffing nearer and nearer to the stump. Tiny got so fussed that he thought, "If he comes any closer, I must jump! I can't stand it another second! I'm going to jump. He's closer than ever!"

But all the time Mother Nature kept whispering to him. "Not yet, Tiny! Not yet! Hold steady! Wait till he actually sees you. If he does, then fly!"

Tiny shivered inside of himself; he didn't dare let himself shiver on the outside. But

he listened to Mother Nature. He had learned that what she told him was always best. But sometimes, oh dear! How terribly hard it was for him to do as she said!

Tiny sat on the stump as still as a bump on a log. He was so frightened he forgot all about being thirsty. And Cap was getting closer and closer. And then - he came right up to the stump and began to sniff at it. "Oh, oh!" thought Tiny, "If he should happen to look up now, I'm so frightened I'm afraid I couldn't even run, and it's all her fault. I'm in a terrible fix!"

2

PATSY JAY WARNS TINY OF DANGER

But Tiny Cottontail was much safer up on the stump than he thought he was. Of course Cap did sniff at the stump and certainly did look as though he would find Tiny, but he soon moved along until finally Tiny could neither see nor hear him any longer. But he was still afraid to leave the stump. How he wished he knew where Cap was.

Then he heard noises: Rat-a-tat-tat! Rat-a-tat-tat! It sounded as if some one were beating a drum ever so fast with two sticks. Tiny moved over a little on the stump so that he might see who was making the noises. It was Red Top the Woodpecker.

Tiny called out. "Hi, there Reddy! Hi!

Red Top the Woodpecker stopped drumming on the tree and looked down at Tiny. "Hello there, Tiny Cottontail!" he said, and then went right on drumming at the dead limb of the sycamore.

But Tiny Cottontail understands Reddy pretty well. "Listen Reddy," said Tiny. "Do you see anything of Cap the Hound? Look around, please, and tell me if you see him."

Little Red Top was clinging to the dear tree with his sharp claws. He quickly hopped all around the trunk, looking in every direction. "No I can't see him, Tiny Cottontail. Now don't bother me any more. This is my busy day." And rat-a-tat-tat went little Red Top's bill against the dead wood.

"Thank you, Reddy," said Tiny, and off the old stump he hopped. He was terribly thirsty again. It seemed as if he could scarcely wait until he got to the Crystal Spring. It wasn't far but he ran anyway. In his hurry he put his nose down in the water too far and it made him sceeze. Then he took sip after sip of the water.

All the time he was drinking Tiny was looking out carefully for enemies. He always has to do that. No matter what he is doing or where he is, Tiny Cottontail never knows when something may jump out and try to grab him.

After he had drunk all the water he wanted he went hopping over some pebbles to the Bubbling Brook. He slipped under some pawpaw bushes and hopped briskly along flipping his little white tail and thumping the ground with his hind feet. He said softly to himself, "I'll go over to the Green Moss Tree and eat some grass. But I'll watch out so if Cap comes I'll be ready to run.

The Green Moss Tree was a big elm tree. Most of the time the north side of it was covered with the greenest of green moss. Now Tiny was as hungry as he had been thirsty before. He was so hungry he could hardly wait until he got to the grass patch. Already he could see the Green Moss Tree and the tender green grass growing all round it. Tiny's mouth watered for that grass but he didn't dare run right into the pitch. No, indeed! Tiny knows better than to do that, and even now Mother Nature began whispering to him. "Be careful, Tiny! Be careful! Be very careful! There's danger not far away. Go on, go on, but go very, very slowly and watch!"

He had learned his lesson and he minded her. He went on slowly, hoppity, hoppity, hoppity, hop, going slower and slower as he got near the grass. The nearer he got to that grass the more he wanted it and the more afraid he was that an enemy was near. Hr tried not to be afraid. He looked all around. "Why," said he, "I can't see anything and I can't hear anything. So I guess I'll eat some grass."

And Tiny hopped into the patch and began eating grass. My, how good that first tender blade of grass did taste! It was gone in a jiffy. Then Tiny took another nibble and began chewing it and wobbling his little nose.

"Oh, I guess Mother Nature saw somebody away off in the woods and was afraid he might make a breakfast of me. Perhaps that somebody has gone now and I can have a fine lunch."

But Tiny had eaten only half of the second blade of grass when he heard Patsy Jay suddenly scream. "Look out, everybody! Here's a sneak and a thief! Here's a terror! Look out! Everybody look out, I say."

Tiny ran with all his might and got under and old brush pile. He had learned that when Patsy Jay gave a warning like that it was time for everybody in the Green Woods to lay low and look out.

3
TINY'S CURIOSITY GETS THE BETTER OF HIM

Tiny Cottontail peeped through the brush pile and waited. Yes sir-ee! As sure as anything that mysterious creature Patsy Blue Jay was shooting at was coming nearer and nearer. Tiny was sure he heard a low growl, too. The noise ws a a little to one side of him. He wanted to turn his head, but

"Mammy Bobcat was carrying a teeny, weeny gray bobcat"

he didn't dare move even the least little bit. No, he sat as still as a little round gray stone.

Then out popped the stranger! Tiny hardly dared to breathe for fear it would see him. Instantly he knew who it was - one of his very worst enemies- Mammy Bobcat. And she was carrying a wee bobcat in her mouth. She came pattering along looking with her sharp eyes in all directions. Nearer and nearer she came to the brush pile where Tiny was hiding.

Tiny was so frightened he sat as if glued to the ground. Yes, sir-ee, sometimes Tiny is so scared he doesn't know wht he's doing. So he does notheing but sit perfectly still.

. Now he had good reason to be scared. There was Mammy Bobcat not more than the length of an arm away from the brush pile! One of the long twigs from the brush pile tickled her nose and made her jump. Tiny was afraid she would turn her head and see him. He was so frightened he trembled all over. Mammy Bobcat was carrying a teeny weeny gray bobcat, the very littlest one you can imagine. Some would have thought the gray bobcat kitten one of the most interesting thing in the world, but Tiny Cottontail thought the little cat nearly as dreadful as its mother. It was just another bobcat that very soon would

be big. He shivered almost as much as he did when he looked at Mammy Bobcat.

Mammy dropped her kitten, switched her short tail angrily from side to side, and looked up at Patsy Jay and growled. The little bobcat kept mewing and mewing, reminding Mammy of what she had to do, for she really had planned to do a great deal this morning. But Tiny Cottontail knew Mammy never is too busy to eat if she can find anything. He knew, too, that like Cap the Hound she was very fond of rabbit.

Pit-a-pat, pit-a-pat, went Mammy round and round the brush pile. She looked everywhere but into it. "Oh dear! shivered Tiny.

"Why doesn't she go away? Why doesn't she take a walk?

Just then Manny Bobcat did go away. And Patsy Jay flew right after her screaming his loudest.

Tiny wanted to get far away from the place where he had seen Manny Bobcat, and he wanted to find his friends, for he was getting very lonely. Yes, he wanted to see Molly and Toby Cottontail and their good friend Jolly White Tail.

Tiny knew all the best rabbit places in the Green Woods. He knew just where to look for his friends; so he ran through the woods straight to the blue grass patch near the Green Moss Tree. But they were not there.

Tiny took a long breath and scampered off again. He hopped over logs, crawled and wriggled through the underbrush, and leaped swiftly through the open spaces.

4

TINY RUNS FOR A FRIENDLY HOLE

As Tiny cottontail ran and ran he grew more and more lonely. He thought the woods never before seemed so big and gloomy. And just then when he was feeling so badly he came in sight of the Crystal Spring. He whimpered for joy.

Right there nibbling the green grass near the Little Pool were Molly Cottontail and Toby Cottontail and, if you'll believe me, Jolly White Tail too.

"Hello there, everybody! Hello!" shouted Tiny Cottontail. He was so glad he ran toward them like a gray streak.

"Why, it's Tiny! It's Tiny!" they all shouted. Soon they were all rubbing noses together.

"Where in the world have you been, Tiny? We've looked all over the woods for you," said Molly.

"We were aftaid something had happened. My, how happy we are to find you!" said big Jolly White Tail, grinning.

And then Tiny told them, just as fast as he could, all about where he'd been and what he'd seen. But, land alive! just as he finished

telling them that Mammy Bobcat had moved out of her old home, Jolly and Toby and Molly all darted away as fast as they could run.

Old Crafty Coyote had come right upon the bunch while they were chatting together. He ran right for Tiny Cottontail because he was the teeniest of all. Old Crafty was wise enough to know that the littlest rabbit is always the easiest to catch. It can't run as fast as the big ones.

Tiny ran around a thicket and hid under a wild gooseberry bush. He knew well enough that wasn't a safe place to hide, but

the the very first thing for him to do was to get out of sight. This gooseberry bush was so small that had old Crafty known Tiny was there he could have slipped under it and nabbed him.

Tiny sat still, his little heart beating, ever so fast! Old Crafty Coyote ran round and round the bush, poking his long nose in among the briers. Tiny wanted to run but something kept whispering, "Not yet, Tiny! Not yet! Sit Still! Sit Still!" So Tiny sat still while Crafty nosed along the other side. Then he heard the voice say. "Run!"

And Tiny ran. Oh, my how he ran! He ran for a friendly hole he knew about. But

when old Crafty had just started after Tiny something made him change his mind. That something was big Jolly White Tail, who came running past in front of Crafty as if he were playing cross-tag.

Crafty shouted, "Why, there are rabbits everywhere around here! I'd rather have this big one!" And away he went chasing Jolly White Tail.

But Jolly White Tail wasn't worried. If old Crafty had gone after little Tiny Cottontail that way it wuld have been mighty bad for Tiny, but Jolly White Tail is big and strong and has wonderful legs, so chasing

him is a different thing. He always knows what to do when Crafty chases him. It's a simplel little trick but it always rids him of Crafty.

Jolly White Tail learned long ago that he can run up a hill faster than either Crafty Coyote or a dog. This is because Jolly White Tail's hind legs are longer than his front legs. So he streaked it out of the woods straight up the Green Hillside. The Farther up the hill he went the farther he was ahead of Crafty. When he reached the top Jolly White Tail was so far ahead that he had a chance to run along the hill and hide in some bunch grass. He peeped over the edge of the hilltop and

saw old Crafty come tearing up the hill. He got to the top, then he stopped and looked all around. "Well, this is puzzling," he said "Now I wonder where that big juicy rabbit went?" Then Crafty ran along the hill not far from where Tiny was hiding. But he just missed him. He went right on and when he was out of sight Jolly White Tail came out of grass grinning and went down the hill. He was in no hurry and felt quite proud of himself.

5
JOLLY IS LONELY WITHOUT THE COTTONTAILS

Jolly White Tail ran back into the Green Woods and listened. First he listened with his right ear, and then with his left, and then he listened with both ears. He stood on his hind legs and peered in every direction, but he couldn't hear nor see any of

his little friends. He thumped the ground, but no one came in answer to his signal. He hopped on through the woods toward the Green Moss Tree where the tender blue grass was. Not one of them was there. He ran on the Bubbling Brook, but none of them was there.

Jolly White Tail was thirsty, so he hopped to take a drink at the Bubbling Brook. Then he pricked up his long ears and listened, but he didn't hear a leaf rustle or a twig snap. A little further on the saw Robin-the-Red hopping around on the ground. Jolly White Tail hurried right up to him and

said, "Hello there, Bob! Have you seen anything of Tiny or Molly or Toby Cottontail?"

"No," said Robin-the-Red, "I haven't seen one of them." And just then he pulled a wriggling worm from the ground. "I'm sorry I can't be of any use to you, Jolly White tail," he mumbled, with the worm in his beak, "but I've got to take this worm to Mother Cheery Robin right away."

"Well, it's surely queer," said Jolly White Tail as he watched Robin-the-Red fly away. "I can't imagine where they can be. I hope they haven't had an accident. I know Crafty couldn't have caught them as he was after me.

Jolly White Tail said
"Hello there, Bob!"

Suddenly Jolly White Tail remembered that Toby, Molly and Tiny couldn't get away from an enemy as he could, just by running. They had to do something else. To be sure they had told him all about it, but he had forgotten.

It is not easy to remember everything one is told, but finally Jolly White Tail did remember. "Why didn't I think of it before?" he said, and away he ran through the Green Woods toward a place they they had told him about. It was a place not far from the Bubbling Brook where there were large stones with a narrow space between them.

The rocks were very, very old. For years and years they had offered a good hiding place for the little people of the Green Woods when they were being chased.

Jolly scampered along until he came to the two big rocks. He peered into the narrow space between them. He saw something in there. He was almost sure of it. He looked again, and sure enough, there was the hind foot of a cottontail rabbit. Nothing else could be seen, just the hind foot and a tiny bit of the hind leg - that was all. Jolly White Tail was excited. He wanted to know who was in there.

He said to himself, "I really believe I know whose foot and leg that is. I really believe I do."

So he put his nose in as far as he could and called out, "Tiny Cottontail! Tiny Cottontail! Is that you? If it is, come right out. This is Jolly White Tail!

Right away there was a good deal of thumping inside the hole. Then there were other sounds that a cottontail rabbit makes when he is backing out of a hole that is a bit too small for him. Yes, sir-ee! It was sure enough, a little contail, and he was coming out backwards, because that was the only way he could get out. All at once out popped a cottontail! And it was

Tiny, just as Jolly had thought.

"Hello there, Tiny Cottontail!" said Jolly White Tail. "My, but I'm glad to see you! Have you been in there all the time?"

"Yes," laughed Tiny, "don't you think I had a fine place to hide?

"Well," Jolly White Tail said, "it sure was a good place for you, Tiny. Old Crafty Coyote could never get you in there.

"Have you seen Toby and Molly?" asked Tiny.

"No, and I was just wondering if you knew where they were." replied Jolly.

"Well," said Tiny, "I'm not sure I do, but I can soon find them because I know where

to look. The last I saw of them they were running like mad to get away from old Crafty Coyote. You see, Crafty's so swift we have to find a hole quickly or he's sure to catch us. Come, I'm sure I can find them. We'll surprise 'em!"

6

THE CABBAGE PATCH:

SAFETY FIRST

Tiny Cottontail and Jolly ran swiftly through the Green Woods until they cme toa small hollow tree. Here Tiny stopped. He put his head in, at the foot of the tree, and shouted, "Hi there, Toby and Molly! Come out! It's Jolly White Tail and Tiny!

Then such a thumping and scratching as there was inside that hollow tree! Molly popped out and then out came Toby.

"Well! Well! laughed Molly. "Here we all are again! Isn't this great!"

Toby danced around, calling out, "Yes, here we are, every one of us, safe and sound!"

"Hi, ho!" they all shouted. "Here we all are again, safe and sound, not a hair missing!"

"And I'm about starved," said Tiny. "Let's run to the Cabbage Patch right away."

"All right! Let's do," said Jolly White Tail, "but let's not run too fast. We've got to

look out for hawks and eagles up in the air and we've got to watch for Crafty Coyote and Mother Coyote along the way."

Tthat's so," said Molly. "We'd better not run too fast even if we are awfully hungry. And, Tiny, you must stay right with us this time. You might get lost again."

7
PATSY JAY GIVES WARNING AGAIN

Hoppity, hop, hop, went Tiny Cottontail and his friends to the Cabbage Patch. They stood up on their hind legs and looked all over it, but they couldn't see a thing but cabbages.

.

Tiny Cottontail also looked up at the deep blue sky. He was looking for Bald Eagle, for he had once had a dreadful time with him. Then Jolly looked up and so did Toby and so did Molly. They were all looking for old Mr. Chicken Hawk or some of his cousins.

But there wasn't a dot in the sky. It was surely safe now to go into the Cabbage Patch. So in they went and began to eat the juicy green leaves. They didn't eat greedity. Oh, no! No matter how hungry Tiny, Toby, Molly and Jolly may be, they never eat fast. They always nibble daintly.

They were all out in the open field now and of course could be seen plainly from the sky. Now and then Jolly White tail could easily have been see, if anyone had been watching from the edge of the woods, because he raised his head a little higher than the others. Jolly usually kept his long ears flat to his shoulders while he was eating, but whenever he thought he heard a sound from over in the woods, up went his ears.

It was a mighty good thing Jolly White Tail didn't put up his ears too many times. If he had, something dreadful might have happened. Indeed it might! Because somebody they hadn't dreamed of was in the Green Woods that minute, and that

somebody was mightly hungry, too.

Well, as it happened, " that Somebody" didn't see them and they ate the juicy cabbage leaves until they were no longer hungry. Then all of a sudden they heard Patsy Jay scream, "Get out of these woods! Get out! Get out! Get out!

Then Chatty Red Squirrel, too, began barking and scolding angrily and loudly, calling, "Get out! Get out! Get out!"

Just as soon as Jolly White Tail and his little friends heard Patsy Jay and Chatty scolding so furiously, they lay low in the Cabbage Patch and listened.

You see they had learned long ago that

when Patsy and Chatty get busy it's time to watch out. They had learned, too that any enemy of Patsy's and Chatty's was almost sure to be their enemy too.

So they all huddled under the spreading leaves of a huge cabbage and whispered together while they watched the woods.

"I wonder who it is they're yelling at," whispered Jolly White Tail.

"It's some one we must look out for, I know that," said Tiny.

"Yes, and I believe we'd better get out of this Cabbage Patch," said Jolly.

"So do I, and right away!" whispered Tiny.

"I'll tell you what, " said Jolly White Tail, "when we start back to the woods let's run in a big circle. We can hide there and then creep toward the place where Patsy and Chatty are scolding. Perhaps we can see who it is."

"Just the thing! said Toby, Molly and Tiny. And they all scudded out of the Cabbage Patch.

8

TINY AND HIS FRIENDS SPY THE SILVER FOXES

By and by, after they ahd gone round and round in a big circle, Tiny Cottontail and his friends got back into the Green Woods. Then moving slowly and softly they started for the spot where they heard Patsy Jay and Chatty still scolding louder than ever. Some one they feared was near. There ws no doubt about that.

Jolly, Tiny, Molly and Toby were very careful not to get too near the spot. But they did want to get near enough to see who it was. They kept out of sight in the underbrush and watched with wide-open eyes.

Some one was coming nearer and nearer. Then all at once they saw who it was! Yes, sir-ee! There right under the big tree in which Patsy and Chatty were perched they saw Spangle the Silver Fox and Mother Fox. Yes, there they were just on the edge of a little thicket, digging a den. The foxes usually dig their den early in the spring, but sometimes their first den is found by some one and then they have to make another.

"There they were digging a den"

Now some would have thought Spangle the most beautiful creature he had ever seen; however, Jolly White Tail and his little friends didn't feel at all that way . They knew mighty well that Spangle and Mother Fox would be only too glad to make a breakfast off one or all of them any time. "But," Jolly White Tail whispered, "as my grandfather always said, 'It's catching before eating.'" So they sat still and watched.

Spangle was making the dirt fly as he dug, and Mother fox was lying on a pile of the freshly dug earth watching him. She was panting as if she too had been digging. By and

by she took Spangle's place and he rested and watched her and kept on the lookout for enemies.

Mother Fox made the dirt fly just as briskly as Spangle. They must have been working quite a while, for there was already a big pile of fresh dirt.

They didn't say a word about the den, as Jolly and the cottontails hoped they would. They seemed to be in such a hurry to get it done thaey hadn't time to talk. Every now and then they changed places and dug and dug and dug.

9
MOTHER FOX ORDERS RABBIT FOR DINNER

After Spangle had again been digging for a long time he turned to Mother Fox, who lay on the ground panting and said, "I'm getting hungry. I think I shall hunt for something to eat. What shall I bring you, Mother?"

"Oh," she answered, "I don't care, as long as it's something good. I think a nice juicy rabbit would taste about as good as anything I can think of. Yes, Spangle, do bring a rabbit. Bring two of them if you can. You should be able to find some in the Cabbage Patch. I saw the long ears of a jack rabbit out there a minute ago."

"All right," said Spangle. "I'll hunt round in the Cabbage Patch first. Maybe there are three or four rabbits there. If there are, we'll make our dinner off a couple of them.

But Tiny and Toby and Molly and Jolly were very, very wise as to foxes and their

ways. They hid and watched both Spangle and Mother Fox.

Of course Spangle didn't find them in the Cabbage Patch, so he went to hunt for mice in some tall grass that was partly blown down. He would stand up quickly on his hind legs and look in front of him. When he saw the grass blades move he know there was a mouse there and, 'SNAP'! Spangle would grab the mouse.

10
BEDTIME
ON THE GREEN HILLSIDE

Jolly White Tail and Tiny, Toby and Molly Cottontail stayed there until darkness began to creep over all the High Hills and the Big Green Woods. Then Jolly White Tail winked at his friends and with so much as a whisper they stole softly out of the thicket through the Big Green Woods

until they came to the Green Hillside. This is where they like to spend the night.

They made their supper off the tender green grass, and when they had eaten all they wanted they got close together in the grass and each made a snug nest. Since Tiny was so very little the others helped him make his nest. "There now, Tiny, your nest is all done," said Molly.

Then Molly and Toby and Jolly snuggled down in their nests. They did not dare to play about. Tonight they wanted to hide and keep still. So they were not really asleep in their nests on the Green Hillside, as they were only resting. It was lovely to

breathe the cool night air - fresh from the dewy grass and to look down the Green Hillside in the bright moonlight.

But all this time - yes, indeed, every moment - they were on the lookout for a possible enemy.

By and by Jolly White Tail pricked up his long ears and looked and listened. Yes, he was sure of it. He saw some one moving down near the edge of the woods.

Then a little later he saw an animal walking about. Jolly White Tail whispered "Toby! Molly! Look! Something is walking

around down there near the woods! Do you see it?"

"Yes," Toby whispered, "I see ut!"

"I see it, too!" Molly said softly.

"Tiny! Tiny!" Jolly called softly. Then Molly called and Toby called but Tiny didn't answer. So Molly crept out of her nest and hopped over to Tiny. She found him sound asleep. She poked him in the side with her nose. My, but Tiny was frightened! He jumped, but when he saw it was only Molly he said, "Goodness, Molly, I thought I was caught!"

"Sh-sh!" Molly whispered. "Keep still and look sharp, Tiny, or you may get caught yet. Do you see that animal down there near the Green Woods? We are all watching him. He's been moving around down there for several minutes. If he comes up here, you know what to do."

"Yes," Tiny whispered, "If he comes up the hillside, I'll sit still and not run until the rest of you run. Then I'll run too."

"That's right," said Molly. "Now we'll all watch him. And I'll stay right here with you so that I can tell you just when to run if we have to."

So Molly made Tiny's nest a little bigger and then cuddled down beside him.

"Who do you think that is?" Tiny whispered to Molly.

"Well," she whispered back, "we can't tell for sure. It might be a dog or it might be a coyote or it might be a fox or a timber wolf. But whoever it is, he will need watching. And there will be no more dozing for us tonight."

10

TINY TAKES A RIDE IN A TUMBLEWEED

Molly Cottontail showed she was a wise little rabbit when she said that Spangle and Mother Fox might come back to the Green Hillside. She knew well enough and so did Jolly White Tail and Toby, that the foxes would soon be hunting in the Green Woods or on the Green Hillside for something

to eat for themselves and their babies. And Molly and her friends knew only too well that rabbit is a favorite dish with them.

And so, while they were thinking of these things and watching, Jolly White Tail suddenly said, "Sh-sh! They've smelled us are coming down from behind us!

Then they all looked. And sure enough, sly old Spangle and Mother Fox were sneaking toward them. "They're surely after us this time," whispered Jolly. "They're coming right this way. No doubt they think we're asleep. It's a mighty good thing we're not asleep. Now when they get near enough,

Ill jump up and run first," he said. "Then they'll start after me, and the rest of you can run for the Green Woods."

"Alright," whispered Molly. "It's generous of you to help us like that, Jolly White Tail. And we'll not forget it. They're coming closer, but we're ready for them!

Spangle and Mother Fox came sneaking softly down the Green Hillside. They were headed right toward Jolly White Tail and the cottontails. The foxes were sure they would get an early breakfast if they could only get near the rabbits without being seen. But it was big friendly Jolly White Tail who surprised them. When they were pretty near, he sprang

up and away. Of course they were after him at once. Jolly ran along the Green Hillside with the foxes bounding behind. He wanted to lead them away from his little friends, the cottontails, especially Tiny, who couldn't run nearly as fast or as far as Jolly.

When Spangle and Mother Fox were running hard after Jolly, Molly and Toby and Tiny raced madly down the hillside straight for the Green Woods.

But sly old Spangle saw the cottontails when they jumped up, and he turned for them at once while Mother Fox kept right on after Jolly. Toby and Molly ran as fast as they could, and shouted and cried to Tiny to run

faster, faster. They were safe in the woods in a short time and thought Tiny was there too. But he wasn't.

Of course Tiny couldn't runas fast as the others. So to gain time he dodged often and ran first in one direction and then in another. Every time Spangle tried to catch him, Tiny jumped to one side. My, but it was a close race! Spangle was right after Tiny every second. Snap! Snap! Time after time his teeth came together as he tried to grab Tiny's little white tail.

Tiny dodged again and tried to go down the hill toward the woods, but he had to turn back up the hill again, for Spangle almost had

him. This time Tiny ran straight toward a ravine he saw just ahead. The ravine was pretty steep on either side, but Tiny knew he could run down the sloping side quite easily if he could just get there in time, because often in the daytime he had played in the ravine.

Tiny reached the ravine and started down the side, but right on the edge he stumbled and got tangled up in an old tunbleweed. We, sir, Spangle was so close behind him that before Tiny could get out of the tumbleweed the sly old fox reached for him. He grabbed the tumbleweed and Tiny at the same time. And lucky it was for Tiny,

"Over and over they rolled"

for the tumbleweed kept Spangle from hurting him. They were running so fast that there was no time to stop, so down they all went together over the side of the ravine - Spangle, Tiny and the tumbleweed. They rolled over and over and over. Yes, head over heels down the side of the ravine they tumbled. Tiny wasn't hurt a bit, but he was held so fast in the tumbleweed he couldn't get away.

11
TINY IS FREE AGAIN

Spangle's teeth must have gotten a good hold on the tumbleweed but they didn't touch Tiny at all. But he was frightened - oh, dreadfully frightened!

"Surley," thought Tiny, "this will be the last of me!" On down they went. Over and over they rolled and then plumpity plump, plump! CRASH! They landed in some underbrush at the bottom of the ravine.

Now all the time they were rolling downward Tiny was doing his level best to get free from the tumbleweed. He didn't give up because it looked bad for him. That's not Tiny's way. Every bit of the way he was wriggling and kicking. And it was a mighty good thing Tiny did kick. If he hadn't he might have made a fine midnight supper for the Silver Foxes.

But Tiny just kept on kicking and wiggling, doing his level best to get away. All at once when they struck the bottom he kicked himself loose.

You see, Spangle hit the bottom of the ravine with such a bump, and at the same

time Tiny gave such a hard kick that Spangle lost his grip and Tiny and the tumbleweed bounced away into some bushes. Tiny was free!

Yes, Tiny was free. And in a moment he knew it was his only chance to get away. Spangle was up in no time and made a dive for the tumbleweed. But Tiny had jumped out and was running with all his might through the underbrush at the bottom of the revine. Spangle started right after him. He was sure he'd get Tiny this time. But he lost him in the underbrush, and when Tiny found he ws safe for a mement he stopped to rest under a wild gooseberry bush. He ws still very much afraid

and frightened because he could see Spangle thrashing frantically around in the bushes a little farther away. Spangle still thought he'd surly get Tiny. It didn't seem as if Tiny had the ghost of a chance to get away. Then Spangle did what he and the fox people do when they think Tiny or any of relatives are close by; he began running back and forth through the brush; because he knows very well that if Tiny or any of his little friends are not found soon he might as well give up the chase until another time.

Tiny wanted to start up and run every time Spangle came within a few inches of him, but he sat still and watched.

After Spangle had hunted around for some time he said, "Well, I guess I'll have to give it up. Likely that rabbit went into a hole and means to stay in it. Yes, I'll give it up. I'll hurry back and see what kind of luck Mother Fox has had. I do hope she caught that big whitetail jack rabbit. She was pretty close to him. I'll hurry back to see if she was smart enough to catch him. He'll make a fine breakfast!"

And sly old Spangle gave up and loped off down the ravine. Tiny waited long enough to be sure he was out of sight. Then he hopped out from under the gooseberry brush and looked and listened. For a moment

he just sat still and shivered. He didn't shiver because he was cold. Oh, no! He shivered because he thought Mother Fox might have caught his good friend Jolly White tail. "My goodness!" said Tiny. "I wonder if Mother Fo did catch Jolly White Tail!" And another little shiver ran clear down his back.

As Tiny went through the Green Woods he felt very, very lonely. He was worried about Jolly White Tail, too. Sometimes he stopped, stood up on his hind legs, and looked and listened. That's the way he does when he wants to see real well. And just ow he did want to see real wall, for he wanted to find Molly or Toby or Jolly White Tail - all of

them if he could. But he didn;t want to ake any noise about it.

The farther he went the more worried Tiny was. But he still felt Jolly White Tail was safe. Yes, when he thought about Jolly White Tail's great strong legs it seemed foolish to think that Mother Fox could ever catch him. And still there might have been an accident. Tiny kept thinking to himself, "Yes, there might have been an accident, and Jolly White Tail might have stumbled into a hole or he might have been caught in a wire fence or he might have run into a sharp stone in the grass and hurt his right hind foot so that he couln't run." These were the

things Tiny kept thinking about Jolly White Tail. Then he began to worry about Toby and Molly too. He couldn't see a sign of them although he had gone quite a distance into the Green Woods and had looked around very carefully. Everything was still.

Tiny wished he could hear a noise. He said to himself that he would almost rather be running from a fox than have evrything so still and feel so lonesome.

Finally Tiny sat down, scratched his floppy ear with his right forefoot and said, "Well, I do declare! It surly looks as if not one of them was in the Green Woods. There's no use for me to look around here

any longer. Even if it is a little dangerous I'm going back to the Green Hillside. Perhaps they're there."

And away he went. Yes, he jumped up and scampered as fast as he could through the Green Woods. And it was a good thing Tiny happened to think of the the Green Hillside. And it was a good thing he ran through the Green Woods in the direction he did. He just reached the edge of the woods when bump! He came right into Jolly White Tail who had started into the woods to hunt Tiny.

"Hello there, Jolly White Tail!" shouted Tiny. He was so glad.

"Hello there, Tiny Cottontail!" shouted big Jolly White Tail. "My but I'm glad to find you and to know you're safe!"

"And I'm so glad to find you and know your're safe!" cried Tiny. "Have you seen Molly or Toby?"

"Yes," said Jolly, "they're worring about you. Come. I'll take you to them.

They ran along together and in a little time they saw Molly and Toby on the Green Hillside.

"I've found him!" shouted Jolly White Tail as Toby and Molly came running to meet them.

"My, Tiny, we're so glad!" said Toby and

Molly as they came up. And they all three rubbed noses with Tiny to show how glad and happy they were that he was safe.

THE END

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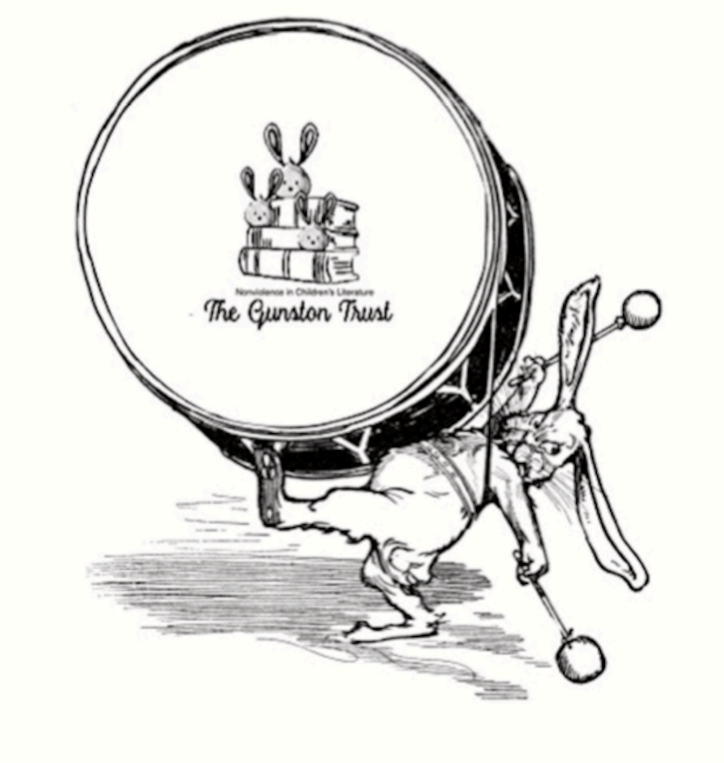
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